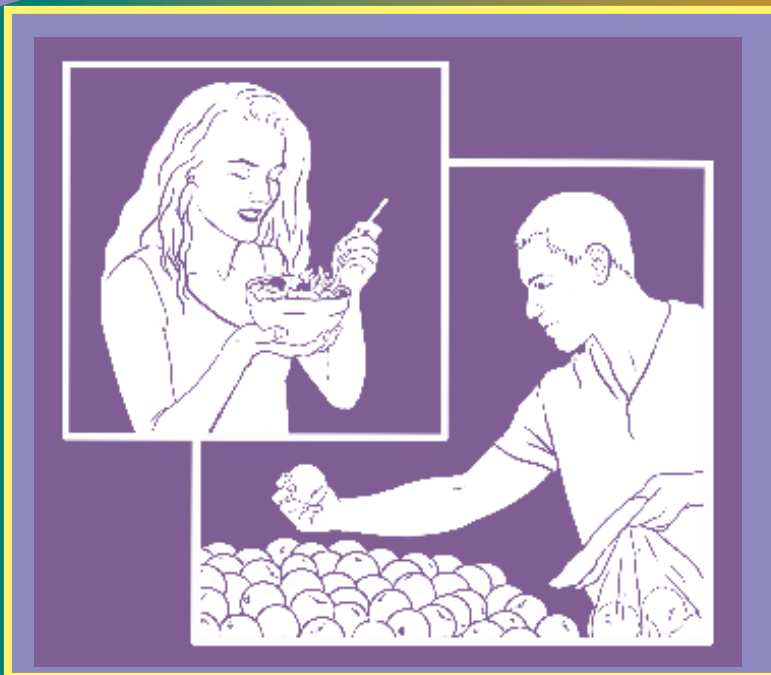


2020 IMPACTS: EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION EDUCATION PROGRAM (EFNEP)



Improving nutritional
security through
education



National Institute of Food and Agriculture

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

www.nifa.usda.gov/efnep

@USDA_NIFA

A MESSAGE FROM EFNEP

Nutrition insecurity, reflected by poor nutrition, limited physical activity, unsafe food practices, and food insecurity, is a significant national health concern. Poor health disproportionately affects minority and low-income populations. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) is the nation's first nutrition education program for low-income populations and remains at the forefront of nutrition education efforts to reduce nutrition insecurity of low-income families and youth today. Funded by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and conducted by Cooperative Extension through land-grant institutions in all U.S. states and territories and the District of Columbia, EFNEP uses education to support program participants' efforts toward self-sufficiency and nutritional health and well-being. Since 1969, EFNEP has reached more than 34 million low-income families and youth. Participants enhance their health by improving their nutrition, food safety, and physical activity practices.

The global pandemic of 2020 had a profound effect upon EFNEP. Program reach declined as stay-at-home orders and public closures were implemented across the nation. Improved behaviors also decreased slightly, as participants struggled to find normalcy in their lives. Still, consistent with previous years, more than 90% of adult participants reported improved behaviors following program involvement.

The need for and value of EFNEP became even more apparent in 2020, as new partnerships were formed to help low-income families and youth gain knowledge and skills for increased food security, food resource management (shopping and food preparation), and food safety to keep healthy in these challenging times.

Prior to the pandemic, a few states had already begun to combine technology with in-person classes as part of a national EFNEP initiative. Insights and resources were shared as the full EFNEP community embraced temporary remote learning. Now, 31 of the 76 institutions that conduct EFNEP have added remote teaching approaches to complement direct delivery as part of their 5-year plans.

The EFNEP community demonstrated remarkable nimbleness during this time of turmoil. As opportunities to teach suddenly stopped, state and local program leadership worked with peer educator staff to strengthen the program, further develop their own skills, and identify new ways of reaching and teaching program participants. Frontline peer educators showed considerable creativity and resiliency in helping program participants gain needed skills, even as they experienced similar challenges in their own lives. As shown in this report, EFNEP continues to make a difference in the lives of low-income families and youth, even, and especially in times of adversity.

signed,



Helen Chipman
National Program Leader,
Food and Nutrition Education

EFNEP Research and Cost Benefit Studies:

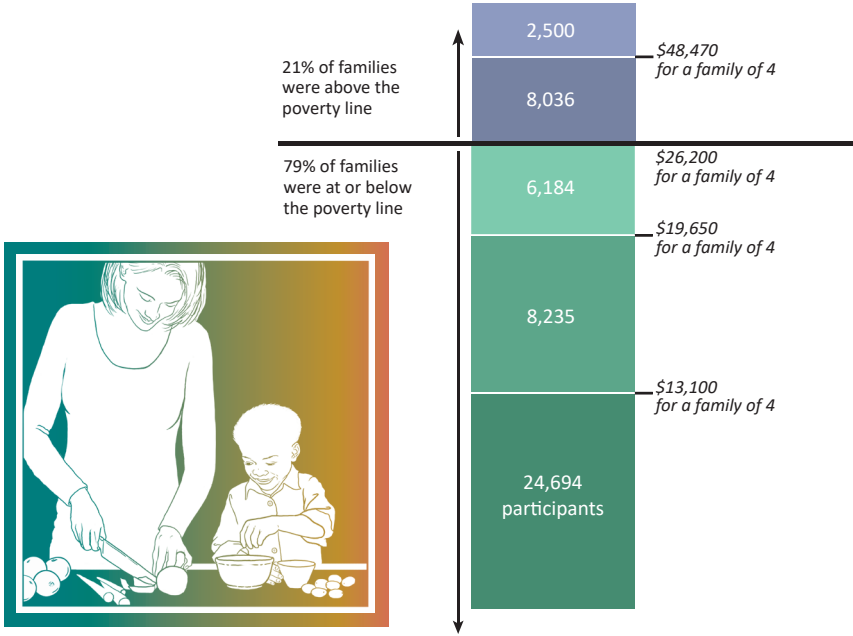
<https://nifa.usda.gov/efnep-research-and-cost-benefit-studies>

EFNEP Reports: <https://reis.usda.gov/reports-and-documents/efnep>

IMPROVING LIVES

REACHING LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

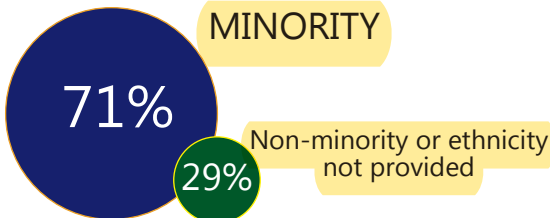
79% of EFNEP participants who reported income are at or below 100% of the poverty line, earning \$26,200 a year or less for a family of four.



In 2020, NIFA received \$69.4 million for land-grant university Cooperative Extension partners to conduct EFNEP in all 50 states, six U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. EFNEP employed 1,322 educators who are members of the communities they serve. In turn, EFNEP educators worked directly with 59,853 adults and 204,525 youth. These educators tailored lessons on diet quality and physical activity, food resource management, food safety, and food security to meet the specific needs of their respective program participants. In March, they also shifted to remote teaching methods, as organizations they worked with were closed.

REACHING DIVERSE POPULATIONS

At least 71% of all EFNEP adults are minorities.



SHARED STORIES

Shawnee County EFNEP has partnered with the community health clinic to provide prenatal nutrition education for more than 20 years. When the current health crisis hit and EFNEP staff were under Safe at Home orders, they resumed classes by phone or video. Most of the participants that were taught using technology were Hispanic and Spanish speaking. Having an EFNEP peer educator to talk to helped reduce feelings of isolation that that they were experiencing.

- Kansas State University

The Groton Central School District received a grant to provide universal free breakfast and lunch to all students based on a high percentage eligible to receive free or reduced meals. Through a collaboration with EFNEP, a public library, youth commission, and food bank, low-income youth and their families received education to increase food security with a focus on vegetables and fruits. EFNEP cooking classes, combined with the Kids' Farmers Market, resulted in youth taking more produce home for their families. The youth also gained advanced food preparation skills, such as knife safety, hand washing, and sanitation. One parent commented, "I have never been able to get this child to eat any vegetables, THANK YOU!" One of the youth participants said: "I really like to help cook, now that I know how."

– Cornell University

A young couple, with their six-month old, took part in a series of healthy cooking and nutrition classes in Central Montana. Although they lacked transportation, they diligently attended all classes. They enjoyed learning how to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their meals, such as vegetables to their pasta sauce, and fruits and vegetables to their smoothies. Their confidence in their cooking abilities grew as they tried new ways to cook their favorite foods.

- Montana State University

As Covid-19 morphed into a global pandemic EFNEP staff remained resilient and dedicated to their mission. Under social distancing and stay at home orders state program staff quickly developed resources and platforms for paraprofessionals to use with EFNEP families. The state team quickly reformatted 3 of the 4 major curricula used in Texas EFNEP to be delivered safely and at a distance while still allowing paraprofessionals to connect personally with program partners and participants. Digital resources from other states were shared as an additional way to reach EFNEP families. Staff were trained on all methods and are now working with the public to continue the mission of delivering quality nutrition education to Texans with limited resources.

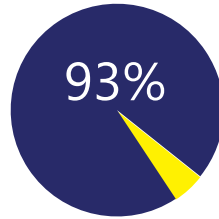
- Texas A&M University

SAVING MONEY

EFNEP graduates reported a collective food cost savings of:

\$549,195

IMPROVING DIETS





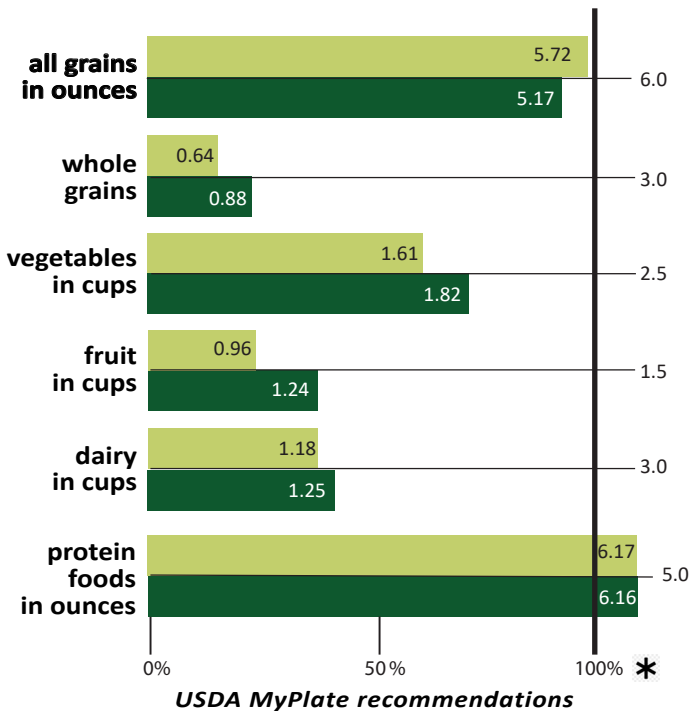
93% of adults improved their diet, including consuming additional fruits and vegetables.

5.

DEMONSTRATING RESULTS

Data reported through diet recalls shows that EFNEP graduates eat more closely to MyPlate.gov recommendations. The data also shows there is still a need for nutrition education.

-  Amount consumed before EFNEP
-  Amount consumed after participation in EFNEP



* 100 percent represents recommendations for females ages 19-30 who get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity, beyond their normal activities. Recommendations for males, other age groups, and other activity levels vary (see MyPlate.gov).

SHARED STORIES

One young mother of two children well knew what it was like to live on a limited budget. Years of struggling to provide for her family made her very unhappy with her life, tired of living on benefits and sitting at home. When she heard of an EFNEP position on the Manu'a Islands, she went to the Extension Office with a small child on each arm and was able to get the job. "Extension gave me a chance, a way to help myself and take care of my children," she said. She now enrolls other families in EFNEP. She is so excited about what the future holds for her and hopes her accomplishments will inspire others.

- American Samoa Community College

The Michigan Adolescent Pregnancy Parenting Program provides transportation for young adult and teen parents to attend EFNEP classes. During one class, a young father immediately applied the lesson learned by using salt substitutes while cooking chicken in the class. The mother, who initially expressed concern about not adding salt, decided to taste the dish and commented with surprise, "It was a very tasty dish." She further noted, "learning about the amount of salt that should be consumed in a day (2,300mg), and after tasting the casserole myself, I plan to lower the amount of salt I use while cooking for my family."

- Michigan State University

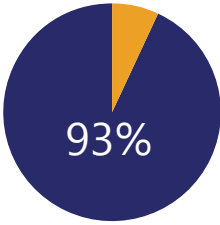
A single mother with developmental disabilities and diabetes wanted to be healthier and become a role model for her two daughters. Through EFNEP, she gained basic cooking skills, found simple recipes where ingredients could be swapped for variety, reduced food waste by freezing ingredients that wouldn't be used right away, drank more water, and began walking to work rather than taking the bus. The oldest daughter now helps prepare meals. The whole family is eating more produce and are more physically active. They are pleased with their progress.

- University of Vermont

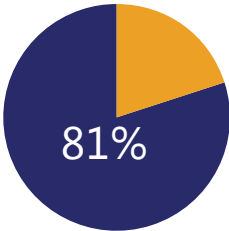
Carrie (alias), a mother in a small Delta town in Quitman County, recruited 13 ladies from her church to create an EFNEP class given her desire to offer her children healthier choices than the prepackaged or quick-to-prepare food items that she fed them. Participants began a contest to see who could bring the best picture of the recipe they prepared at home. Carrie reported that EFNEP helped her gain confidence in her ability to cook and prepare food for her family and to better budget her food dollars, which she found helpful, living in a small town without a grocery store.

- Mississippi State University

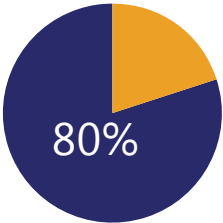
CHANGING ADULT BEHAVIOR*



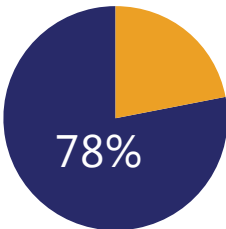
Percentage of adults improving diet quality practices



Percentage of adults improving food resource management practices

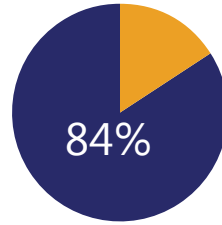


Percentage of adults improving food safety practices

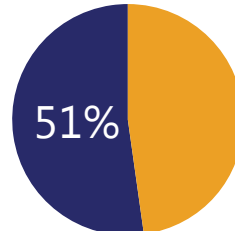


Percentage of adults improving physical activity practices

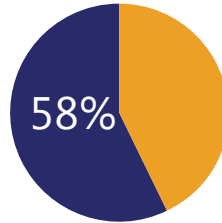
INFLUENCING YOUTH



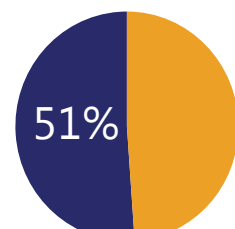
Percentage of youth increasing knowledge or ability to choose healthy foods



Percentage of youth increasing knowledge or ability to prepare low-cost, nutritious foods



Percentage of youth improving food safety and preparation knowledge or practices



Percentage of youth improving physical activity knowledge or practices

*A new research-tested Adult Physical Activity Questionnaire" (FPAQ) was introduced in 2018. Previous data cannot be compared.

STRONG HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

EFNEP has made a difference in the lives of American families and children since 1969. It began as a pilot project in Alabama as USDA sought solutions to concerns of poverty and hunger. President Lyndon B. Johnson authorized \$10 million for the EFNEP program in 1968, and in 1969 Congress authorized \$30 million under the Smith-Lever Act. Originally EFNEP was delivered by 1862 land-grant universities. In 2006 EFNEP expanded to include 1890 land-grant universities. Today, 76 institutions work with community partners nationwide.

MAINTAINING EXCELLENCE

Successful programs require constant attention. Changing demographics of nutrition-insecure families, an increasing number of Americans at or below the poverty line, and burgeoning educational technologies present new challenges and opportunities for nutrition education programs. Ongoing EFNEP initiatives are underway to:



- Receive periodic feedback to ensure program quality, integrity, and fidelity and meet the changing needs of participants.
- Confirm that adult and youth program indicators are scientifically valid and reliable.
- Strengthen science-based learning methods and enhance teaching techniques with appropriate new technologies, social media, and social-ecological approaches.

An EFNEP participant shared “The changes I have made since starting these workshops shows. My blood pressure has decreased since I’m reading my labels and cutting bad stuff out. Even my husband is enjoying my food when I didn’t think he would change. He even tries some of my exercises with me. I’m glad I never missed a class.”

- Central State University

For more information, visit www.nifa.usda.gov/efnep or contact Stephanie.Morriss@usda.gov; Carinthia.Cherry@usda.gov; or Helen.Chipman@usda.gov

NIFA invests in and advances agricultural research, education, and extension and seeks to make transformative discoveries that solve societal challenges.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. | February 2021